**Science Delivery Action Items and Discussion Points from October 2014 and April 2015 Steering Committee Meetings**

April 2015 Steering Committee Meeting

Science Delivery related action items

* Steering Committee members will think about their own organizations and consider next steps needed to facilitate adoption and use of LCC products, including technical or marketing assistance, cooperative extension and training and provide feedback to Ken Elowe, Bill Hyatt or Andrew Milliken before the June Steering Committee call.
* LCC staff will visit with state, federal and other partners as requested in the summer and fall to discuss available LCC products and seek input on relevancy, adoption and use. Steering Committee members should contact Andrew Milliken prior to the June call if interested in scheduling a visit.
* LCC staff and technical teams will indicate which Science Needs and Science Delivery Needs could be addressed through direct contracts; create RFPs for remaining highest ranking needs; provide more explicit information on desired outcomes and applications related to Science and Science Delivery needs where requested; and provide updated recommendations to Steering Committee.

Science Delivery related discussion Points

* Relevancy from OMB’s perspective is the application of science to delivery
* LCC products need to be sold, they need to be translated, and we need to provide service to our organizations to get the products used. The question is, what are the mechanisms to doing this?
* Steering Committee members need to think about their own organizations, and what they need to take LCC tools and use them to implement conservation on the ground.
* Getting the tools out there is going to require buy-in from the state leadership. Getting their attention could be tricky but it’s very important.
* There is a burden on the LCC to do and show and demonstrate, and there is a burden on others to learn and understand and capitalize. It’s a two-way street.
* Do we need extension, helplines, a service center – do we need a workgroup to tackle this? Should we hire an outside person to do focus groups and market research to try and give us the answers we need about customer support?
* We also need to consider the role of technology and user interfaces for the decision support component.
* In order to make this more relevant there probably needs to be more training. I think there is a big gap in capacity and the ability to use technology between the federal and state agencies and folks at the local level. So I can see the use in providing enhanced training opportunities.
* By training practitioners, they will become ambassadors for the use of our data, the vision of our LCC, and the LCC itself.
* We should first address whether we have an appropriate balance between science and delivery. Science is a strength of the LCC and should be a priority, but I do recognize the need to do science delivery as well.

October 2014 Steering Committee Meeting

*Science Delivery related action items*

* LCC staff will assign a staff member as point of contact for help in understanding and using each project or product and include that contact information on project web pages and in Conservation Planning Atlas.
* LCC staff will work with contractors to develop one-page handouts for each LCC project, outlining project goal, objectives, P.I.s, products, and links to spatial data and other products. The fact sheets will include socioeconomic issues addressed by project if relevant.
* LCC staff will add information to the LCC website that shows how projects fit together and support LCC goals and objectives.
* The Connecticut River Pilot Core team will evaluate the implementation of the tools developed through the Connecticut River Pilot and include that as part of lessons learned for future applications.
* LCC staff will continue to provide in-person training opportunities and will also develop online training modules describing products and showing how to access use them.
* Steering Committee members will provide suggestions on extension agents within their agencies or jurisdictions that they think would be able to provide LCC information to others if trained.
* LCC Steering Committee members should contact Ken Elowe or Andrew Milliken to set up opportunities to visit with staff in their state or organization to provide information on the LCC including existing meetings that the LCC can tag onto.

*Science Delivery related discussion points*

* In looking at next steps, we need to think about the implementation step. What we can learn from the (Connecticut River Watershed) pilot? We should ask stakeholders about the implementation, and whether they would use this if they were not part of that process. What is essential to someone trusting this map, this design?
* If you have certain qualities that people are looking for, they will use the tool. You could survey people to find out what would be relevant. You could go to a Land Trust Alliance meeting and survey them. It’s another evaluation thing, and they are trying to promote the idea of actionable science. It’s hard for LCCs to do actionable science at the scale you are trying to, but as far as the information you create being used, in a conservation framework, there is no element in there integrating producer and user or science. You need to try to find users.
* What are the tools? How do they get used? How can practitioners apply them and for what purpose?
* But, for me to bring this back to my organization, I need to be able to explain how the priorities were identified, and that they were based on a scientific process that was established, and how the review was conducted.
* I think we have to realize that this is a tool, or really a system, to put a grade on the conservation value of whatever project you’re talking about. But for most projects, the conservation value is just one aspect of what you’re looking at. If it were up to the staff and only based on conservation, there are a lot of projects my agency wouldn’t undertake. So I think there is precedent for incorporating social and economic factors. If this tool is designed to grade projects on a conservation scale, then we should remember that we have and do take into account other factors in the decision-making process.
* It’s really hard to get our heads around hundreds of projects. It’s very difficult to measure the reachback to our own agency. I just found out someone is doing some marsh work, but there are 15,000 people in my agency and so I can’t keep track of everything.
* I think a lot of the argument needs to be framed in economic and social contexts. When a fact sheet on a project is written, it includes the socioeconomic issues.
* Looking at the projects at a glance and other brief documents, that discusses the outcome, I think that communications should talk to the scientists and reframe it in a way that’s palatable to the public. Right up front have an impact statement about what this product contributes.
* The folks in the field just notice time passing, and the tools are not available to them or they don’t know that tools are available. When I talk to staff biologists, they don’t see it as something available to them. Other people roll their eyes. These are people we’ve been trying to keep informed, and I see this as a significant problem. The LCC has a lot of products and tools.
* We also need to reach out to key practitioners. I see the need for some sort of LCC helpline, so that people can and will regularly go to the LCCs for guidance on using LCC tools.
* Stop talking about projects and start talking about products and service. In order to be a trusted source, you have to build up that trust, through what we call engagement. We can’t just build projects and products for their own sake, but build them according to the idea that people will use them. So your boots on the ground will be talking all the time about bringing that ground-up information. I think a lot of it is this training. If we’re going to argue for LCC commitments in the coming year, it’s going to be less about projects and more about bringing information and training out.
* For many people, peer-to-peer outreach is the most important. There are always early adopters. You can do that by conferences, webinars, training, train-the-trainer. The best teachers are people who have already used it and understand the challenges.
* I’m thinking about whether or not consulting foresters should be brought in. They write a lot of stewardship plans with NRCS. If there’s a tool that’s relevant to them they will likely use it. These are examples of programs that already exist, that we could try to get our programs into.
* It would helpful to set up a few visits to the agency. We have a few people who have been doing a lot of work with the LCC, but outside of that half dozen, there are 180 other employees that don’t have a clue and are so busy that they’re not going to pay attention to you. But most divisions have a quarterly meeting where everyone meets centrally and discusses what’s going on for the next quarter, plus a lands team meeting every few months. Any of those meetings would be good opportunities for trainings.
* I think it would be effective if we had one day with everyone from the state, we brought in all the fed agencies and everyone gets to hear about the tools available for their top three questions. I think it’s a good example of what we could do as a federal partnership.
* I think we need a cooperative extension person who is going out on the ground showing people how to use these tools. FWS can’t afford to hire a bunch of those agents, so I think the gorilla in the room is how to come together to make this happen.
* What I’m hearing is that many agencies already have extension agents. So maybe the LCCs need to get all the extension people together and say: these are the messages we want delivered. The hardest thing to do is build an audience, but extension people already have done that.
* I think the challenge is to find a way to integrate this with existing programs in the states. We need to present this information in a non-threatening manner. It can’t be seen as a competing effort. I think the data is great; it strengthens the information we have, it enriches SWAPS and existing plans. We already do outreach to the consulting foresters and NRCS. So we should add this information to that. We don’t need a separate effort. Maybe some states don’t have a program like that, but would be interested. I think we should use an adaptive management approach to our outreach. We should present the tool not as something new or threatening, but as an enrichment tool. I don’t think we can apply one strategy to all agencies or all states or all areas. But I agree that our focus should be on training-the-trainer, rather than on training all the users.
* I would like the NGOs to come to these meetings because I think we can bring some capacity. A lot of us are already thinking about this – how this kind of science can be used to inform management.
* I want to caution that while it’s important to talk about outreach, there are still unmet needs for data collection and science. At the Diversity Technical committee meeting, many needs were brought up.
* Science Delivery training over the summer that was geared to GIS folks. That group is very efficient for a lot of delivery, and they are nested within the agencies, as long as managers know to go to the GIS people.
* We have noted that in addition to in-person training, we should be developing modules to be hosted online, in partnership with NCTC. As long as there is a human contact for each module
* We need communications relevancy and tool relevancy. I think we need to come to each of your geographies in each state with whatever staff you want present and talk about what we have that’s available and get your feedback on what needs to be tweaked. We’ll need your help to get the right people in the room.
* You should consider who the best person or best organization to do science delivery. A lot of people rely on personal connections or established relationships, and we need to direct our outreach to those people. We should avoid reinventing the wheel. A lot of this relationship-building has already happened effectively through other means. So we should think about what LCCs can do in order to help those people do this job for us.